



A NEW APPROACH TO AN OLD LINE OF WORK

*With wolves recovered, and now poised for delisting,
Montana's management plan passes an early test.*



**Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks**

After several delays, the process is finally underway to remove Montana's wolves from the federal list of endangered species. A final decision is possible in 2008.

On January 29, 2007, The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service proposed to delist the wolf in Montana, Idaho and Wyoming. Federal officials also said lingering legal issues in Wyoming will not stop delisting in Montana and Idaho.

The Rocky Mountain gray wolf was officially declared recovered in 2002.

The wolf's removal from the endangered species list will mark the culmination of what's often called "one of the fastest recoveries of an endangered species on record."

Since 2004, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks has kept a close watch on potential conflicts between wolves and people and moved quickly to resolve those conflicts—and to renew public confidence in FWP's ability to balance the needs of people and wildlife.

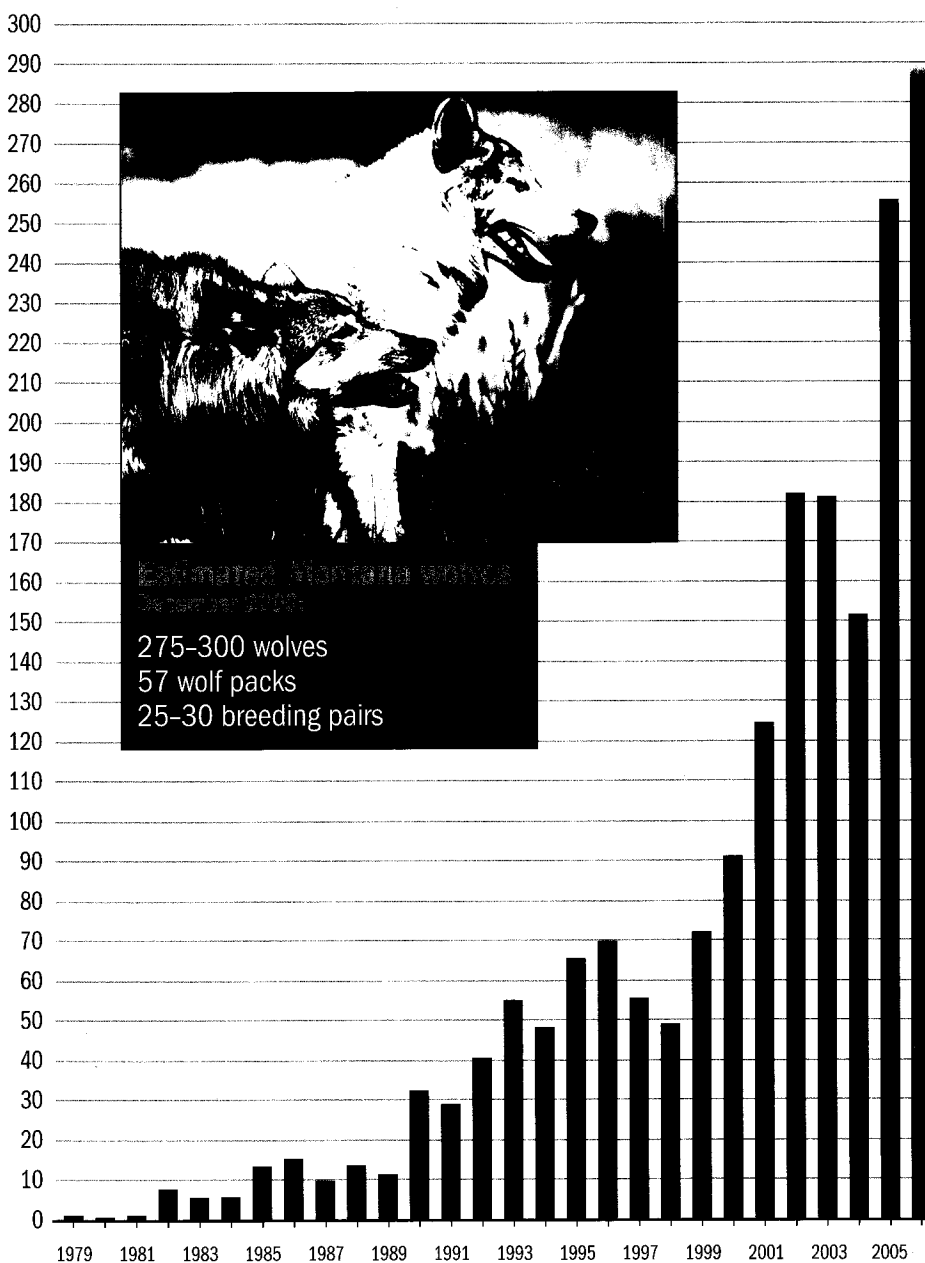
Common sense and common values

Through nearly a decade of work to create and carry out a wolf management plan, Montanans envision a reasonable distribution of wolves.

That vision is based on public acceptance that wolves inhabit Montana, and, especially, on trust they'll be properly managed. Sometimes that means killing wolves that cause trouble.

Minimum Estimated Montana Wolf Population 1979-2006

one of the fastest recoveries of an endangered species on record



SOURCE: MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

The key to management is straight forward: manage wolves like any other wildlife population.

FWP works to manage wolves, not recover them. There is no longer a wolf "recovery" program active in Montana. Today, FWP works to

manage the wolves that are here, not to introduce or transplant wolves to new areas.

Wolves that show up in new places, do so on their own. How long they stay depends on how well they fit into the modern Montana landscape.

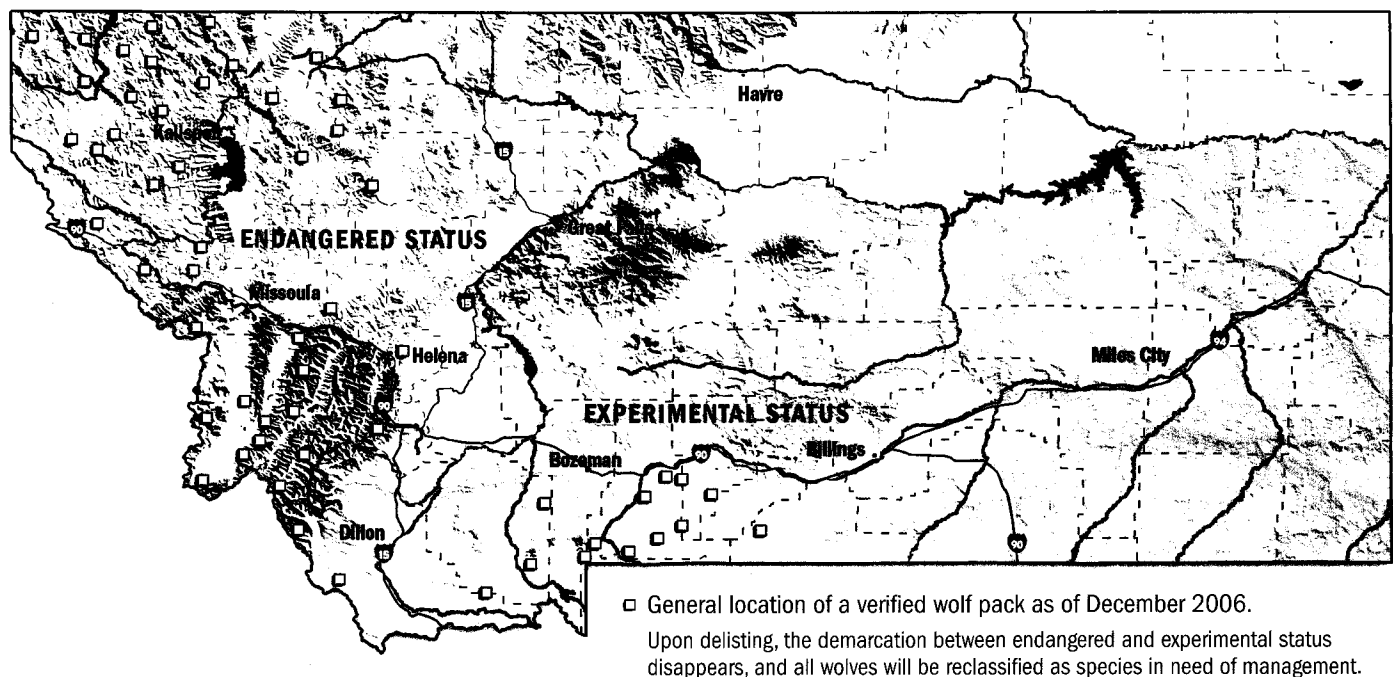
The key to the conservation end of Montana's plan is that there will always be room for at least 15 actively breeding wolf packs in Montana, which will allow Montana to choose among the most flexible management tools.

Interim Management Options for Problem Wolves			Upon Delisting
Management options	Northern Montana "Endangered" wolves	Southern Montana "Experimental" wolves	All of Montana
Technical assistance from FWP to prevent or reduce wolf-depredation risks	YES	YES	YES
Kill wolves: USDA Wildlife Services as directed by Montana FWP	YES	YES	YES
Private landowners can harass or kill wolves	NO	YES*	YES**

* Incidents must be reported to Montana FWP within 24 hours. Special federal regulations apply.
 **Kills must be reported to Montana FWP within 72 hours.



Approximate Montana Wolf Pack Distribution



One conservation and management principle is clear: wolves that attack or kill Montana livestock are removed from the population.

Wolves and Livestock

At this juncture, one conservation and management principle is clear: wolves that attack or kill Montana livestock are removed from the population.

In 2006, FWP approved the removal of more than 50 wolves involved in depredations.

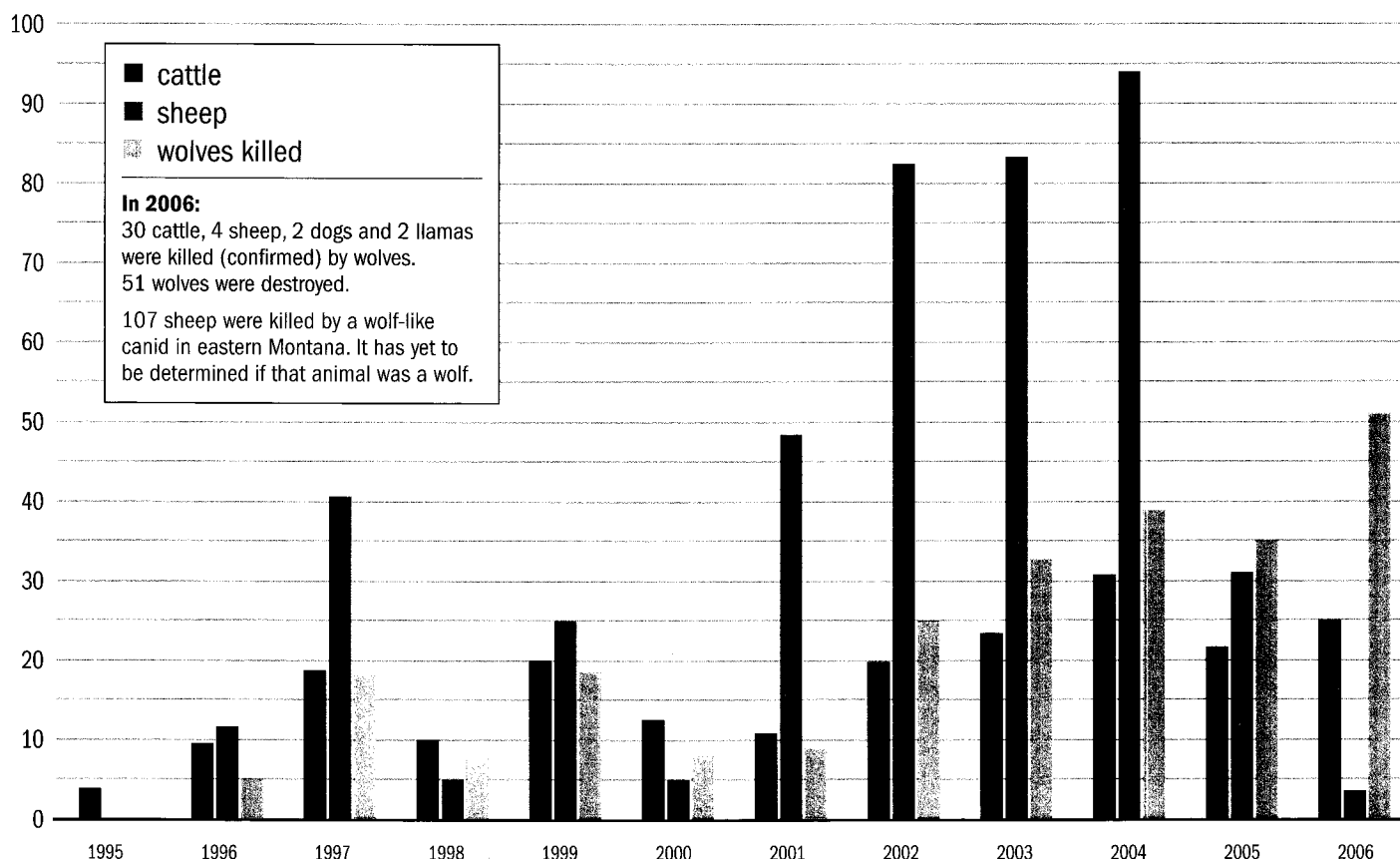
FWP takes an "incremental" ap-

proach to lethal control to remove offending wolves. It also reduces the size of a wolf pack, which decreases food requirements. The removal focuses on repeated depredations, and on wolves that attack adult livestock. Should depredations become chronic, additional wolves, or the entire pack, could be eliminated.






Confirmed Depredation Losses to Wolves

(The actual number is higher, because dead livestock sometimes can't be found or the cause of death can't be confirmed.)





Interim Responsibilities for Managing Listed Wolves

 Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks	 U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	 USDA Wildlife Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Day-to-day wolf management ■ Wolf monitoring, tracking, and collaring ■ Wildlife population research and monitoring ■ Laboratory health and disease investigations ■ Public education and outreach ■ Work with USDA Wildlife Services and ranchers to reduce risks and conflicts ■ Cooperate with USDA Wildlife Services investigations of suspected wolf kills and depredations ■ Determine how to resolve conflicts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Delist wolves ■ Lead law enforcement investigations of wolf deaths ■ Explain federal regulations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Work with FWP and ranchers to reduce risks and conflicts ■ Investigate suspected wolf kills and depredations ■ Carry out response, as determined by FWP

Montana's Wolf Delisting Efforts

- 2000** Montana Wolf Management Advisory Council begins to develop plan in anticipation wolf delisting.
- 2001** Montana's Legislature agrees that, upon delisting, wolves will be legally reclassified in Montana as a "species in need of management."
- 2002** USFWS downlists wolves from endangered to threatened in the Northwest Montana Recovery Area.
- FWP Commission approves Montana's Wolf Conservation and Management Plan.
- 2004** USFWS approves Montana and Idaho wolf plans. Wyoming's plan is not approved, which delays wolf delisting.
- Montana begins to take over some everyday wolf management.
- With federal funding, FWP hires staff to carry out state's wolf conservation and management plan.
- Montana and Idaho officials urge U.S. Interior Department officials to delist the wolf separately from Wyoming.
- 2005** Court ruling reclassifies wolves in northwestern Montana back to endangered and removes flexible rules.
- Montana assumes wolf management, yet still complies with federal regulations.
- Montana and Idaho U.S. Congressional Delegations urge USFWS not to delay delisting.
- Govs. Schweitzer and Kempthorne tell Interior Secretary Norton that Montana and Idaho want an "immediate initiation" to delist wolves.
- 2006** Govs. Schweitzer and Kempthorne deliver Interior Secretary Norton five options to delist wolves.
- Federal officials announce intent to remove wolves from the endangered species list in Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming.
- 2007** Federal officials propose to delist wolves in Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming. The process will proceed for Montana and Idaho, even if Wyoming's legal issues are not resolved. A final decision could occur in 2008.

Connection. Cooperation. Commitment.

Montana's Wolf Specialists

The first point of contact for a landowner seeking help with a wolf-related question, concern or problem can always be the nearest FWP office, or the local warden or biologist.

Such inquiries will be quickly referred to the local wolf specialist.

Since 2004, five FWP wolf specialists have worked to keep track of the state's wolf packs. These specialists share information about local wolf packs with landowners, livestock producers, businesses, agencies and others.

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Wolves and Other Wildlife

The removal of the Rocky Mountain gray wolf from the endangered species lists will allow wolves to be managed just like elk, deer, bears, and moose, and

all other Montana wildlife populations.

Once delisted, Montana hunters will be afforded the opportunity to harvest wolves.

There are a few places in Mon-



Wolf Monitoring Results

2005 38 individual wolves and 31 wolf packs had radio collars.

About 90 radio-tracking flights were conducted.

2006 44 individual wolves and 30 wolf packs had radio collars.

Of the packs without collars, 8 inhabited backcountry areas or Indian reservations; 6 collars were lost, and 13 wolves eluded collaring efforts; but FWP continues to monitor these wolves through tracking, surveys, public wolf reports, communication with landowners, agencies and others.

About 90 radio-tracking flights were conducted.

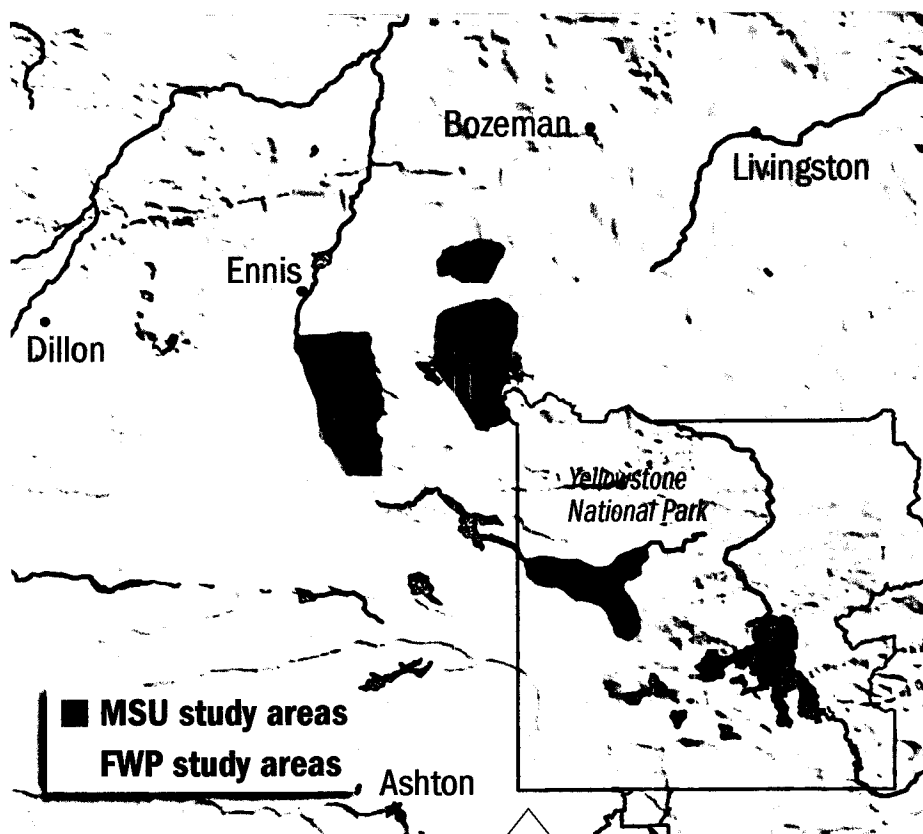
Interim Hunting and Trapping of Listed Wolves

Regulated harvest	Northern Montana "Endangered" wolves	Southern Montana "Experimental" wolves
Public hunting or trapping of wolves	NO	NO

Hunting and Trapping of Delisted Wolves		
Regulated harvest	All of Montana	
Public hunting or trapping of wolves	YES	

tana where wolves are affecting elk populations, like the upper Gallatin area south of Bozeman.

While a direct cause and effect relationship between a drop in elk numbers and the presence of wolves may seem obvious, there is no clear-cut answer. Elk numbers in some areas—like those in or near Yellowstone National Park where wolves have lived for about 10 years—have indeed declined. Yet in other areas—like those near Glacier National Park, where wolves have lived for more than 20 years—elk numbers are stable or increasing.



Learn more about Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks wolf management, ongoing research, and how to a wolf sighting on-line:
fwp.mt.gov/wildthings/wolf/

Right now, FWP is participating in several studies outside Yellowstone National Park to determine how wolves and other environmental factors affect wildlife and hunting.

WOLF MANAGEMENT
MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

Report wolf activity. In 2006, volunteers and more than 400 wolf-sighting reports helped to identify 14 new Montana wolf packs. Visit fwp.mt.gov. Click "Report Wolves."



**Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks**

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